



Natural Heritage &
Endangered Species
Program

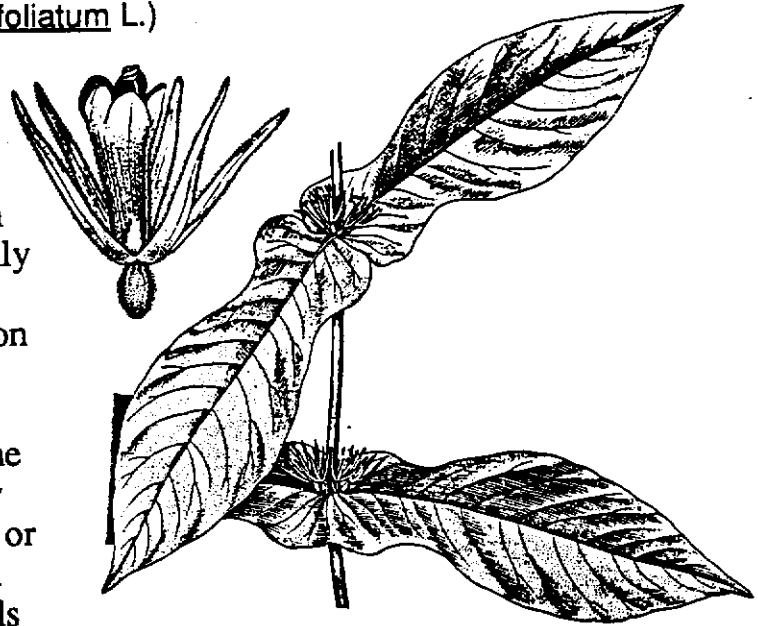
Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Division of Fisheries & Wildlife
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MASSACHUSETTS ENDANGERED PLANTS

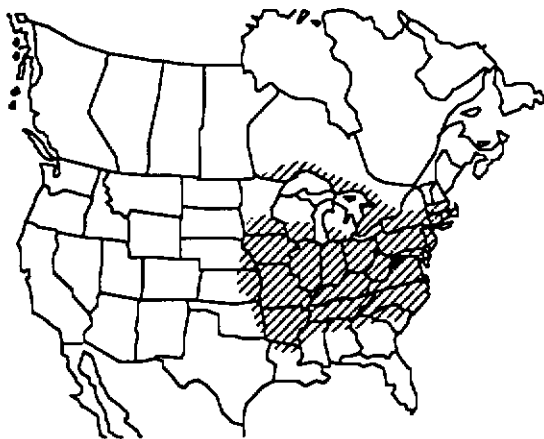
BROAD TINKER'S-WEED; FEVERWORT
(*Triosteum perfoliatum* L.)

Description

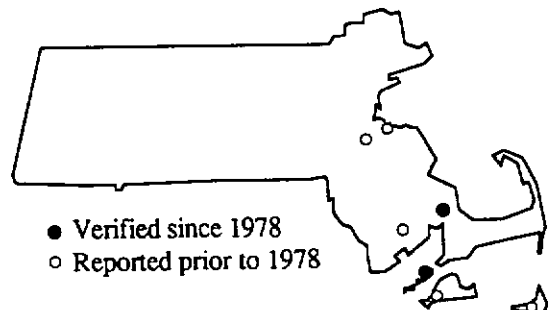
Broad tinker's-weed (also known as wild coffee or horse-gentian), a member of the honeysuckle family, is a coarse herb which grows up to 13 dm (4 feet) tall but is usually less than 9 dm (3 feet) in Massachusetts. One to six stout stems grow from a common base. Leaves are obovate or obovate-oblong, 10-22 cm (4-9 in.) long, 4-10 cm (1.5-4 in.) wide, abruptly narrow below the middle, fused around the stem, and usually softly pubescent beneath. Purplish brown or greenish sessile (stalkless) flowers grow in groups of 1 to 4 from each axil. The sepals are 10-18 mm (.25-.75 in.) long, finely and uniformly pubescent on back and margin, and often glandular. The slightly fleshy



Gleason The New Britton and Brown Illustrated Flora of the Northeastern US and Adjacent Canada New York Botanical Garden, 1952.



Range of Broad Tinker's-weed



Massachusetts Distribution by Town

fruit is greenish orange to orange-red and very conspicuous in summer/fall.

Similar Species

Wild coffee, Triosteum aurantiacum, (also called tinker's-weed or horse-gentian) is very similar to broad tinker's-weed, and the two have been considered varieties of the same species by some authors. However, wild coffee is readily separable by its much narrower leaves which are not broadly joined around the stem--only a narrow connector can be seen around the stem connecting the bases of the leaves. Ordinarily it prefers more mesic (moderately moist) conditions than broad tinker's-weed.

Habitat in Massachusetts

In general, broad tinker's-weed is found in dry, open woods or thickets, usually shunning dense shade. The current sites in Massachusetts include two in Bourne and one in Gosnold. Two stations are situated on top of shell middens from Native American camp sites, and one is in a shrubby coastal heathland. Associated plant species include wild columbine (Aquilegia canadensis) and agrimony (Agrimonia gryposepala).

Range

Broad tinker's-weed grows from Massachusetts to southern Minnesota and south to northern Georgia, Louisiana, and eastern Kansas.

Population Status

Broad tinker's-weed is currently listed as "Endangered" in Massachusetts. There are 6 historical records (unverified since 1978) and 3 current occurrences (discovered or relocated since 1978). Habitat succession, from more open or shrubby conditions to densely forested, is apparently the main reason for rarity here. This condition has resulted from a widespread halt in cutting and burning. The species is also considered rare in Rhode Island, Delaware, Georgia and Louisiana.